In the context of Crises Prevention and Recovery the UNDP:

- Promotes economic and human development
- Assists governments in controlling small arms and preventing armed violence
- Helps communities prevent, prepare for and recover from natural disasters
- Supports the participation of women and marginalized populations
- Assists in conflict resolution

Because Latin America and the Caribbean experience the second-highest incidence of flooding, landslides, earthquakes and droughts in the world, the region is continuously dealing with natural disasters.

On the 19th of May 2006 Suriname experienced what was later called the first significant natural disaster. Following a heavy rainfall and resultant flooding that left thousands homeless and very distressed in the Interior of Suriname, a number of international agencies agreed to pledge approximately US$1.5m in relief funding to these communities through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). These agencies include the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Dutch Minister of Development Cooperation, and the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCRP/UNDP).

Within the framework of principles governing donor contributions to the United Nations, the aforementioned agencies channeled a part of their relief funding through UNDP as part of the wider emergency response supported by the international community.

The funds were utilized to address immediate humanitarian needs and necessities, to cover logistics related to the emergency and to provide support to the National Coordination Centre for Disaster Control (NCCR) in Suriname.

UNDP utilizes different methods whereby national authorities and organizations are in charge of implementing projects and programmes (e.g. National Execution, NGO Execution modalities). However, in exceptional circumstances, such as humanitarian crises situations, where there is need for a very rapid disbursement of funds, UNDP utilizes the Direct Execution modality of programme implementation. This means that UNDP has overall responsibility for the project, though implementation can be carried out through partner organizations such as National Authorities, Civil Society Organizations and International Organizations.

In the case of the flooding crisis in Suriname, UNDP has chosen to utilize this management
approach, as it has proved to be the most responsive in other humanitarian crises in which UNDP has intervened.

Following a request from the Government of the Republic of Suriname, the Resident Coordinator of the UN System and UNDP Resident Representative in Suriname, Dr. Inyang Ebong-Harstrup, requested the assistance of a United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team from OCHA. This team arrived in Suriname on 12th May and has been supporting the work of the NCCR in the intervening period.

Both UNDP and the UN system in general, have been working very closely with the National Authorities, International Partners and Civil Society Organizations on finding suitable and rapid responses to the humanitarian crisis in Suriname. The UNDP is committed to continuing to work with these partners to ensure that all possible support is provided to improve the livelihoods of those who would have suffered through this crisis.

As a result of this disaster the UNDP’s portfolio has encompassed a programme focused on the establishment of an early flood warning system which will provide real time data.